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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

MY TRIP TO THE NATIONAL 4-H CAMP

A radio talk by Katharine Washburn, West Virginia 4-H club girl, delivered in the National 4-H club radio program, Saturday, July 1, 1933, broadcast by a network of 58 associate NBC radio stations.

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Every year in June two 4-H boys and girls from each State and some member of the state extension staff are sent as delegates to the National 4-H camp at Washington, D. C. The general record of the club member, including outstanding project work, leadership work among younger club members, general community work, and individual recognition at camps, is the basis upon which one is selected to attend. I was one of the four selected to represent the Mountain State at the Fifth national 4-H club camp.

On the first evening we West Virginians found ourselves a part of a group of 160 boys and girls who represented 40 states. Through the Extension Division of West Virginia University which made our going possible, we felt our responsibility to bring back to other club members as much information as possible, and be better prepared to further encourage 4-H club work in our State. The camp site was an inspiration within itself. It was situated on the Department of Agriculture's grounds, near the Department Buildings. On the green grass were the neat rows of tents surrounded by elms and evergreens. In the background the Washington monument seemed to remind us of the ideals of George Washington.

It would be difficult to tell all the things that we learned during the seven days of the camp. Each day began with flag raising, and after breakfast the camp assembled in the auditorium of the National Museum for talks by some of the nation's outstanding leaders.

Dr. Smith of the United States Department of Agriculture, welcomed the group. He said, "With the view you get of 4-H club work from the nation's capitol, we expect you will return to your homes and be a larger influence in rural matters, in education, in cooperation, in rural social life. It is to each of you and your associates that we look to take the lead, when you get back home, in making agricultural and rural life in America the most hospitable, the most cultural, the most effective and satisfying life in the world."

Mrs. Jane Deeter Rippin, National Director of Girl Scouts, described for us the six rights that youth has in life; namely, the right to count for something; the right for adventure; the right for romance, that is, anything that will break the dull routine or rhythm of life; the right of joyousness; the right of love and affection, and the right of spiritual interpretation of the values of life.

After the talks, the boys and girls from the north, south, east, and west met in group conferences and discussed common ideals, attitudes, and aspirations. We discussed such problems as the choice of a vocation, social and family relationships, personal development, and ideals for service.

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Each day after the conferences educational tours were taken. These tours were by bus, each conference group in its own bus with some one to explain the places we visited. They took us to the United States Department of Agriculture's experiment farm at Beltsville, Md., to St. Alban's Cathedral, Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington, the Pan American Building, and the Arlington Cemetery, where we viewed the graves of our nation's soldiers.

At Mount Vernon a boy from Maine and a girl from Washington State placed a wreath on the tomb of General Washington. A wreath was also placed on the tomb of the unknown soldier. We visited the United States Department of Agriculture's greenhouses and the Lincoln Memorial. To look at the kind face of Lincoln chisled in the marble gave a new meaning to the words of his Gettysburg address inscribed on the south wall of the memorial building.

On Sunday, we attended services at the church in Alexandria, where George Washington worshipped. The Corcoran Art Gallery, the Washington Monument, the Smithsonian Institution, where we saw "The Spirit of St. Louis," and the Library of Congress were all studied. We visited the White House one day at high noon.

Our evening programs were interesting, consisting of a play, campfires, a banquet and an evening of games and folk dancing. The last night of camp was a high spot in the week to the West Virginia group. We were seated on the camp ground near the pile of wood that was to be the last camp fire. Presently the fire was lighted, and as the wood began to crackle, the story was told how this fire was lighted from the candle with which Snow Alfred, a West Virginia girl, lighted the closing camp fire of the First National 4-H Camp five years before. Then, from the central fire, candles were lighted until every member of the camp was holding a tiny light. Everyone then turned from the fire and faced the direction of their respective States. A resolve went forth to return home with the spirit of helpfulness and cooperation.